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SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [CU](#) [TU](#)
SUBJECT: TURKEY QUIET ON EU CUBA BENCHMARKS

REF: A. SECSTATE 71974
[1](#)B. ANKARA 390

Classified By: Political Counselor Daniel O'Grady, reasons 1.4 b, d

[1](#)1. (C) The GOT does not intend to endorse publicly the June 23 EU policy statements on Cuba, but believes Turkey will be able to support the EU approach of setting aside sanctions and furthering a political dialogue based on Cuban progress on key human rights benchmarks, MFA Latin America Department Head Ece Ozturk-Cil told us July 7. Ozturk-Cil noted that Turkey has generally sought to track EU policy toward Cuba and said she would convey our points (Ref A) to MFA Americas Director General and former Ambassador to Havana Vefahan Ocak and coordinate with MFA's EU Department. Ocak had earlier complained to us about the EU which, he said, sought to champion a human rights agenda in Cuba while member states "shamelessly" cut commercial deals for their companies (Ref B).

[1](#)2. (SBU) Ozturk-Cil noted that Turkey has no political dialogue with Cuba at this time, only annual Joint Economic Commission meetings, alternating between Ankara and Havana. The Turkish side is led by the Foreign Trade Undersecretariat. The last commission meeting was held in Ankara, March 2008, where Turkey agreed to extend Turkish EXIM bank credits to Turkish exports to Cuba, presently worth only thousands of dollars, according to Ozturk-Cil.

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